

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A parts ordering system having a first domain, a second domain and a third domain connected in a tree structure, each domain being a unit of processing in a computer system corresponding to a working unit on a production line, wherein said second domain includes:

receiving means for receiving an order from the first domain, the received order being an order for a part of a product to be produced by the production line;

judging means for judging a kind of the order;

machining planning means for devising a machining plan based upon the judged order;

expansion means for expanding, into each component part, a part corresponding to the order in accordance with the machining plan;

order planning means for ~~devising an ordering plan for each expanded component part~~ generating parts order information to be orders placed based on each component part information expanded by said expansion means and a pre-determined minimum order number data of each component part to be required to produce the product stored in a database, and;

~~ordering means for ordering in units of individual parts in accordance with the ordering plan; and~~

communication means for communicating[,] the parts order information generated by said order planning means to the third domain ~~orders in individual parts units,~~

wherein said communication means prevents the first domain and the third domain from communicating the order to each other.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The system according to claim 1, wherein said first domain, second domain and third domain each have means for issuing an order, means for receiving an order, means for devising a machining plan based upon the order received, means for performing expansion, into each component part, in accordance with the machining plan, means for devising an ordering plan for a part that has been expanded into its component parts, means for ordering a part expanded into individual parts units based upon the ordering plan, means for reading data from a database in accordance with the order for the part, and means for writing the read data to the database;

wherein a plurality of connections are made possible on a network in a tree structure.

Claim 3 (Original): The system accordance to claim 2, wherein said means for receiving an order has means for making a comparison with data, which has been retained in a database, to determine whether an order is a new order, a modified order or re-transmission of the same order.

Claim 4 (Original): The system according to claim 2, wherein said means for devising a machining plan has means for comparing a designated delivery date of a received order and planned production date retained in a database, and means for scheduling an expected production date based upon results of the comparison.

Claim 5 (Original): The system according to claim 2, wherein said means for performing expansion into each component part has means for performing expansion in units of individual parts constructing a manufactured product based upon a received order, and means for calculating the number of parts.

Claim 6 (Original): The system according to claim 2, wherein said means for devising an ordering plan has means for comparing a number of parts contained in inventory and a number of parts required, and means for calculating minimum units of an order based upon results of the comparison.

Claim 7 (Original): The system according to claim 1, wherein said first domain, which corresponds to an ordering starting point, has means for issuing an order in accordance with an order input, and said third domain, which corresponds to an ordering end point, has means for receiving an order in response to the issuance of the order.

Claim 8 (Original): The system according to claim 1, wherein said first, second and third domains are connected in a nodeless tree structure, and an order for each component part processed by said first domain is communicated to the third domain without processing being duplicated by the expanding means of said second domain.

Claims 9-10 (Canceled):

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The system according to claim 1, further comprising:

stopping means for comparing the amount of specific parts contained in inventory stored in the database and a required amount of specific parts obtained by said expansion means, and stopping the communication of an order to the third domain in a case where the amount of specific parts contained in inventory is greater, by a prescribed amount, than the required amount of specific parts.

Claim 12-20 (Canceled).

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): A parts ordering method whereby a first domain, a second domain and a third domain connected in a tree structure, each domain being a unit of processing in a computer system corresponding to a working unit on a production line, deliver and receive orders, comprising:

a receiving step at which the second domain receives an order from the first domain, the received order being an order for a part of a product to be produced by the production line;

a judging step at which the second domain judges a kind of the order;

a machining planning step at which the second domain devises a machining plan based upon the judged order;

an expanding step at which the second domain expands, into each component part, a part corresponding to the order in accordance with the machining plan;

an order planning step at which the second domain ~~devises an ordering plan for~~
~~each expanded component part~~ generates parts order information to be orders placed based on
each component part information expanded in said expanding step and a pre-determined
minimum order number data of each component part to be required to produce the product stored
in a database; and

~~an ordering step at which the second domain orders in units of individual parts in~~
~~accordance with the ordering plan; and~~

a communication step at which the second domain communicates[,]
the parts
order information generated by said order planning means to the third domain,
~~orders in~~
~~individual parts units,~~

wherein said communication step prevents the first domain and the third domain
from communicating the order to each other.

Claim 22 – 36 (Canceled)

Claim 37 (New) A parts ordering method whereby a first domain, a second
domain and a third domain connected in a tree structure, each domain being a unit of processing
in a computer system corresponding to a working unit on a production line, deliver and receive
orders, comprising:

an expanding step of expanding, into each component part, a part corresponding
to an order that has been received from the first domain, the received order being an order for a
part of a product to be produced by the production line; and

communication step of communicating, to the third domain corresponding to each component part expanded by said expansion means, an order in units of individual parts for each component part expanded by said expanding step.